

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PINT, CA

SUBJECT: QUEBEC AND FEDERAL POLITICS AS SEEN BY LISE BACON

1. IN WIDE-RANGING LUNCHEON CONVERSATION TODAY, LISE BACON  
(FORMER TWO-TIME PRESIDENT OF QUEBEC LIBERAL PARTY, CABINET  
MINISTER UNDER BOURASSA 1973-76, AND NOW CITIZENSHIP COURT JUDGE)  
OFFERED THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS:

A. FEDERAL LIBERALS MAY WELL WIN ONLY MINORITY-  
GOVERNMENT STATUS IN ELECTION WHICH SHE (AND OTHERS) FEEL SURE  
WILL BE IN JUNE. (WHEN SHE SAID THIS TO A FORMER EXECUTIVE  
ASSISTANT NOW IN THE PMO, HE SADLY AGREED.) THEY ALSO COULD  
LOSE, INCLUDING A LOSS OF A NUMBER OF SEATS IN QUEBEC IF TORIES  
ARE SAVVY ENOUGH TO KEEP JOE CLARK OUT OF THE PROVINCE  
DURING THE CAMPAIGN. SHE ASSUMES THE PC HAVE STRATEGISTS SMART  
ENOUGH TO DO THAT. TORY GAINS WILL STEM FROM QUALITY OF PC  
CANDIDATES TO BE FIELDDED THIS TIME, SUCH AS PETER BLAIKIE,  
LOUIS DESMARAIS AND JACQUES O'BREADY (MAYOR OF SHERBROOKE)  
AND OTHERS. LATTER IS NOT REPEAT NOT A DECLARED CANADIDATE  
BUT LIBERAL FRIENDS OF BACON IN THAT AREA HAVE TOLD HER THAT,  
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IF HE DOES RUN, HE MAY CARRY A NUMBER OF THE EASTERN TOWNSHIP  
RIDINGS WITH HIM.

B. PAUL DESROCHERS TOLD HER YESTERDAY HE EXPECTS A  
SNAP FALL ELECTION BY THE PQ. THIS WOULD BE PARTICULARLY TRUE IF THE  
PC WIN THE FEDERAL ELECTION OR EVEN IF THE LIBERALS WIN BY A  
SMALL MARGIN. HOWEVER, IRRESPECTIVE OF THE FEDERAL ELECTION, SUCH

A PROVINCIAL ELECTION MIGHT WELL BE CALLED TO "REINFORCE THEIR MANDATE", GIVEN THE STEADY SUPPORT IN THE POLLS AS CONTRASTED WITH THE APPARENT NUMBER OF CONSTITUENCIES THAT THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT IS ANTAGONIZING EACH DAY (BUSINESS, WOMEN, LABOR, CIVIL SERVANTS, ETC.).

C. NEW MEMBERS ARE FLOWING INTO THE QUEBEC LIBERAL PARTY AT UNPRECEDENTED RATE. SHE WAS PARTICULARLY STRUCK BY FACT THAT, AT CHICOUTIMI RIDING MEETING TO ELECT DELEGATES TO THE LEADERSHIP CONVENTION, MORE THAN 300 PEOPLE SHOWED UP. THAT IS UNHEARD OF IN AN AREA IN WHICH PQ JUSTICE MINISTER BEDARD WON BY 14,000 VOTES. SHE NAMED SEVERAL PROMINENT UNION NATIONALE (UN) SUPPORTERS WHO ARE NOW GETTING LIBERAL PARTY MEMBERSHIP CARDS AND PREDICTS MANY MORE IN VIEW OF SHAW DEFECTION (MONTREAL'S 372).

D. RATE OF NEW NATURALIZATIONS UP SHARPLY SINCE PQ VICTORY; 47,000 IN MONTREAL LAST YEAR. SHE ATTRIBUTES THIS TO LATTER FACTOR BECAUSE RELATIVELY FEW ARE THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN HERE ONLY THREE YEARS AND TAKING ADVANTAGE OF NEW CITIZENSHIP LAW; MOST HAVE BEEN HERE TEN YEARS OR MORE BUT HAVE NOT PREVIOUSLY "BOTHERED". SHE COMMENTED ON THE NUMBER OF ITALIANS FROM HER FORMER RIDING WHO HAVE LAMENTED THAT THEY DID NOT TAKE THIS STEP IN TIME TO VOTE FOR HER BUT THEY "NEVER DREAMED THE PQ WOULD WIN."

E. AT A DINNER IN QUEBEC IN DECEMBER RODRIGUE BIRON,  
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LEADER OF THE UN, APPROACHED HER TO RUN FOR THE UN AT THE NEXT ELECTION. SHE TURNED HIM DOWN BUT ASKED WHETHER HE WAS, AS HE APPEARED TO BE, TURNING HIS BACK ON THE ANGLPHONE AND ETHNIC COMMUNITIES AND HE SAID "YES, I DON'T NEED THEM. WHAT I NEED ARE THE NON-SEPARATIST PQ NATIONALIST VOTES." (THIS COMMENT, TWO MONTHS BEFORE SHAW'S RESIGNATION, BEARS OUT SHAW'S GENERAL ALLEGATIONS RE PARTY ORIENTATION.)

F. RE THE DESROCHERS PREDICTION OF A FALL ELECTION, SHE NOTED THAT IT IS STANDARD PRACTICE TO SUGGEST AN ELECTION IS NEAR IN ORDER TO "KEEP THE MILITANTS INTERESTED." NONETHELESS, SHE THINKS THE REST OF THE ARGUMENT HOLDS WATER.

G. SHE THINKS RYAN IS CERTAIN TO WIN THE LEADERSHIP OF THE PARTY. (IN CHICOUTIMI ALL TWENTY-FOUR DELEGATES ELECTED ARE FOR RYAN AND SHE CLAIMS THAT A SIGNIFICANT PROPORTION OF THOSE ALREADY CHOSEN IN OTHER RIDINGS ARE TOO.) SHE ALSO FEELS THAT HE IS THE MAN THE PARTY AND THE PROVINCE NEED. "THE PQ WOULD BE DELIGHTED TO SEE GARNEAU CHOSEN; THEY ARE LYING IN WAIT FOR HIM."

H. SHE COMMENTED THAT SHE THINKS LISE PAYETTE MAY SOON

CALL IT A DAY (CF. MEMCON WITH LAURETTE ROBILLARD OF FEB. 14, FORWARDED FOLLOWING DAY ON SAME SUBJECT.) SHE NOTED THAT WHEN SHE WAS ON A TRIP TO QUEBEC CITY IN DECEMBER PAYETTE HAD GONE OUT OF HER WAY TO SPEAK TO HER AND, IN RESPONSE TO SOME TWITTING, HAD SAID "IF I HAD KNOWN IT WOULD BE LIKE THIS, I WOULD NEVER HAVE GOT INTO THIS BUSINESS." COMMENT APPARENTLY NOT REPEAT NOT MADE IN JEST.

2. COMMENT: BY LAW, A JUDGE CANNOT "ENGAGE IN POLITICS" BUT IT WAS CLEAR THAT SHE HAS KEPT HER LINES OF COMMUNICATIONS OPEN. FOR EXAMPLE, SHE COMMENTED THAT SOLANGE CHAPUT-ROLLAND HAD CALLED HER OVER THE WEEKEND TO REQUEST THAT SHE PUT ON PAPER WHAT SHE THINKS THE QUEBECOIS WOULD CONSIDER THE SINE QUA NON IN A NEW CONSITUION. HER BROTHER IS STILL ACTIVE IN THE PARTY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BUT "REMAINING NEUTRAL" IN THE LEADERSHIP CAMPAIGN IN ORDER TO BE A "HEALER" WHEN IT IS ALL OVER. HER PERSONAL PLANS ARE STILL INDEFINITE. IF THERE ARE BETTER SIGNS OF A NEAR ELECTION, SHE WILL RUN. IF NOT, SHE MAY "CUT AND RUN" OUT OF THE PROVINCE ALTHOUGH SHE WILL FEEL SOMETHING OF A TRAITOR NOT TO SAY AND FIGHT. ON THE OTHER HAND, SHE POSITIVELY CANNOT FACE THREE YEARS ON THE CITIZENSHIP BENCH. HARPER

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